

Town Meeting Coordinating Committee

Guidelines for Visual Presentations at Town Meeting

Create effective visual presentations for the people in the auditorium and the people who are watching on TV or on the web. If you need to show a great deal of text, use a handout on the back table. Contact the Town's Information Technology (IT) Director, Kris Pacunas, at 259-3222 or pacunask@amherstma.gov if you have technical questions or concerns.

Computer Presentations

Save your files to a thumb drive and bring it with you to Town Meeting.



- **Make the text easy to read:** Use large font sizes. Color shows up well. **Contrasting elements** are more visible. Text from a book or newspaper is likely to be dense, small, and ineffective.
- **Summarize.** The text in your presentation should summarize the main points of your remarks. Use bullet points rather than prose.
- **Use PowerPoint.** A computer presentation format like PowerPoint works well. Alternatively, a shareware equivalent, like Impress, is available free from www.openoffice.org.
- **Images:** Drawings, photographs, and maps work well. Use photos taken at a high resolution. Poor quality photographs will look even worse on a large screen.
- **Videos:** All common video file types are supported including a YouTube or other web-based video.
- **Test:** It is crucial that you practice and test your presentation after you've saved the final electronic version. All aspects of your presentation, spoken and visual, must stay within time limits of 3 minutes for comment, 5 minutes for initially making or later amending a motion.
- **Provide a copy:** TMCC will post your presentation on the Town Meeting webpage. Please provide an electronic or paper copy for this purpose. Contact townmeeting@amherstma.gov.

Overhead Projector

The overhead projector (also called a digital imager) is useful for showing material you've prepared on paper or cardboard, or displaying small three-dimensional objects. An assistant is helpful.



- **Correct shape & size:** The glass plate is 14" x 14". Place the document face up in the center. Ideally keep the document square or in a landscape 3 by 4 ratio. The projector has a zoom feature to adjust the size displayed on the big screen.

Once At Town Meeting

- **Come early (before 6:45pm):** Find the IT staff person and let him/her know you have a presentation. S/he will load your presentation on the computer from your thumb drive.
- **Laser pointer & slide advancer:** If you wish to use a remote to advance your own slides or to use a laser pointer; both are available from the IT staff person.
- **You can bring your own device.** Remember, this is the riskiest type of presentation in terms of possible technical difficulties. It is advisable to contact the IT staff person prior to the night of your presentation to make sure the proper connectors/adaptors will be available. If you want to use your own laptop or tablet at Town Meeting, find the IT staff person earlier that evening to test your device.

For more information on speaking at Town Meeting, visit www.amherstma.gov/tminfo.